

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0950

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AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

UNCLAS ATHENS 8049

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, GR

SUBJECT: CPF RECOMMENDATION: 41ST THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR,  
SEPTEMBER 5-19, 1976

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE; USIA/ICS/E, IEU

REF: STATE 225725

1. EVENT DATE: SEPTEMBER 5-19, 1976. LOCATION: THESSALONIKI, GREECE. JUSTIFICATION: STRONGLY RECOMMEND NOMINATING THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR OF 1976 AS A COMMERCIAL PRESENCE FAIR (CPF) WARRANTING U.S. PARTICIPATION. THE EMBASSY, USIS, AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE AND THE CONSUL GENERAL AT THESSALONIKI ARE CONVINCED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MOUNTING AGAIN IN 1976 A U.S. PAVILION WITH AS MUCH SUPPORT FROM WASHINGTON AGENCIES AS CAN BE PROVIDED. THIS RECOMMENDATION STEMS FROM THE FACT THAT THE THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR IS THE MAJOR ANNUAL COMMERCIAL EVENT IN GREECE, AND RECEIVES YEAR-ROUND PUBLICITY. NATIONAL PARTICIPATION IS VIEWED BY THE GOG AS EVIDENCE OF THE DESIRE FOR SIGNIFICANT COMMERCIAL RELATIONS. THE U.S. PAVILION IN 1975 WAS SUCCESSFUL IN ITS OBJECTIVE OF DEMONSTRATING TO DEMOCRATIC GREEK REGIME U.S. INTEREST IN MAINTAINING STRONG COMMERCIAL TIES. HOWEVER, A COMBINATION OF LEAN PROMOTIONAL BUDGETS AND RESIDUAL ANTI-AMERICANISM DURING PRIME RECRUITING PERIOD RESULTED IN VERY LOW PARTICIPATION - ONLY 23 FIRMS IN 1975.

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EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT WITH IMPROVEMENT IN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL

CONDITIONS A SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER PARTICIPATION CAN BE ACHIEVED IN 1976. COMPARABLE TO THE 39 EXHIBITORS IN 1973. SUCH A STRONG SHOWING BY U.S. FIRMS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN 1976. THE U.S. IS NOW FACING PARTICULARLY AGGRESSIVE MARKETING EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THE EC COUNTRIES AND THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT VITALLY IMPORTANT TO GIVE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF OUR DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN AND INCREASE OUR SHARE OF THE MARKET. IN THIS REGARD, THE EMBASSY WOULD ESPECIALLY APPRECIATE COMMERCE SUPPORT OF ITS EFFORTS TO SECURE NEW TO MARKET PARTICIPANTS. ALTHOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT NECESSARY IN 1976, THE EMBASSY RECOGNIZED THE LIMITATIONS INHERENT IN ATTEMPTING TO REPEAT AN EFFORT ON THIS SCALE YEAR AFTER YEAR. GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR 1976, FAIR, EMBASSY WOULD NOT REQUEST DESIGNATION OF COMMERCIAL PRESENCE FAIR FOR THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR OF 1977, BUT PROPOSES GOING INTO FAIR ON BIENNIAL BASIS THEREAFTER.

2. BEING SUBMITTED BY SEPARATE AIRGRAM

3. THE TOTAL COST OF PARTICIPATION IN 1975 WAS APPROXIMATELY DOLS 60,000, OF WHICH DOLS 23,000 WAS PROVIDED BY COMMERCIAL PRESENCE FAIR FUNDS. THE REMAINDER WAS RAISED THROUGH SALE OF SPACE TO PARTICIPANTS. FOR 1976 THE EMBASSY WISHES TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE U.S. PAVILION IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO ACCOMODATE IN EXCESS OF 40 BOOTHS AND AN ENLARGED CENTERPIECE EXHIBIT. HOWEVER, THE FAIR AUTHORITIES HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED AN INCREASE IN RENTAL COSTS OF APPROXIMATELY 17 PERCENT, AND INFLATIONARY COST INCREASES OF 15 TO 20 PERCENT MUST BE CALCULATED ON OTHER COSTS. THE INCREASE IN SPACE TOGETHER WITH THESE PRICE INCREASE WOULD NECESSITATE CPF FUNDING OF THE MAGNITUDE OF DOLS 38,000, NET OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH A COMMERCE DEPARTMENT EXHIBIT MANAGER. THE EMBASSY WOULD, HOWEVER, EXPECT TO INCREASE THE PRICE CHARGED EXHIBITORS PER BOOTH FROM DOLS 1400 TO DOLS 1500. (TO ENABLE EMBASSY TO RECRUIT ON A SELECTIVE BASIS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SELLING ALL BOOTHS, EMBASSY WOULD RESIST INCREASING PRICE OF BOOTH BY MORE THAN DOLS 100). THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE MINIMUM CPF FUNDING NECESSARY IS DOLS 34,000. THE EMBASSY THEREFORE REQUESTS FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF CPF BUDGET OF DOLS 34,000 FOR THE THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR OF 1976.

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